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SHRINE MONT 2021



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"Close to Home" an Advent focus from Sanctified Art

By Hilary Smith, Rector

Advent begins on Sunday, November 28. Again this year, we are using art from <https://sanctifiedart.org/>. About the theme, "Close to Home," they write: "When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts. "Close to Home" acknowledges the "already but not yet"



tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God's promised day - our everlasting home - is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us." Here is an image to give you a taste of what we will share during Advent. There will also be an Advent Calendar and an Advent devotional that we will be sending out electronically.



Electronics Recycling Event - Nov 6th

Electronics Recycling Event - Securis Richmond

November 6 @ 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Securis, CVWMA's electronics recycling event vendor now has a facility in Richmond located at 8419 Glazebrook Avenue (near Staples Mill and

Hermitage Roads). They they will host events on the first Saturday of every month from 10 am- 2 pm to collect ewaste. Plan to arrive prior to 2 pm as Securis is unable to help customers who arrive after 2 pm. Anybody in Greater Richmond Area is welcome at monthly events. COVID-19 protocol in place at all times.



Fees and Accepted Items

Visit their webpage for accepted items and fees, and to learn more about the monthly events or follow Securis Richmond on Facebook.

Monthly event dates:

- Sat, Nov 6
- Sat, Dec 4



Eucharistic Leftovers - Wednesday Worship 2.0 Centering Prayer and Holy Communion

Eucharistic Leftovers - Wednesday Worship 2.0 Centering Prayer and Holy Communion - In the parlor: We gather at 11:30am and begin our silence at 11:35am for 20 minutes. Following the centering prayer, we have a short service of communion from the reserved sacrament. If you would like to join us by Zoom, please do. Join on Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88017545313>.





A Message from Hilary +

Dear Friends and Companions in Ministry,

Every November, I think about the many things for which I am thankful, even when times are hard. I like to consider the theme of thanksgiving as we make our way to Thanksgiving Day. The very first day of November is the day in



the Church calendar that we give thanks for All the Saints - those in heaven and those on earth. We will be observing All Saints' Day on the Sunday following November 1. On Sunday, November 7, during our 10:00 a.m. service, we will read the names of our

loved ones and friends who have died in the last year. We do this to remember and give thanks for them. My mother will be on the list this year. This reading of names is certainly a mixture of emotions and thoughts, thanks and grief, but also hope and faith in our God who continues to hold them close. Also, we are never really apart from them, for we participate in "the communion of the saints." This is the idea that we continue to share life with those who have died, life in God, that never ends. We remain in community with all those who have gone before us to, as my PhD advisor, Martin Havran, liked to say, "their great reward."

All Saints' Sunday, November 7, is also the day that we hope to receive pledge cards for 2022. I like to turn in a pledge card on or around the time of All Saints' because I am thankful to those who, years ago, gave and worked so that Holy Comforter is here for us. I see pledging in the context of the communion of the saints. I pledge because I am thankful to God and want to be a part of continuing God's ministry in this time and place. I'm also thankful for you and the community that we share, the ministry that we

share. Pledging can be an act of thankfulness, of gratitude.

At the end of November, we come to the day of Thanksgiving. We will offer a Thanksgiving service online this year on Thanksgiving Eve that you will be able to view at any time. The Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend is the first Sunday of Advent. Many of us love Advent and are thankful for this short season of the Church year, as a time of preparing and anticipating.

In her book, *Small Simple Ways, an Ignatian Daybook for Healthy Spiritual Living*, Vinita Hampton Wright states, "Gratitude and joy are best friends; you rarely experience one without the other. If you - even reluctantly - murmur a thank-you prayer, you remind your heart of something that is praiseworthy or good for your life. That reminder awakens the natural human response to good, which is joy." I wish you every joy this Thanksgiving season and as we enter into Advent.

In gratitude for you,

Hilary+



Central Richmond Region Thanksgiving Service

By the Rev Hilary Smith, Rector

Clergy from our Region, including me, are planning and recording a service for



Thanksgiving. We have 12 churches in our Region and at least four will be taking part in the service to be filmed at St. Paul's. The recording will be shared by each church as we desire. We will post the

Thanksgiving Service on Wednesday, November 24, Thanksgiving Eve, and it will be available for you to view when it is best for you. One of the unforeseen graces of this difficult time navigating church life amid a pandemic is that we have been working together as a Region and a Diocese more than ever.



Fringe Festival in Edinburgh

By Mary Davis

My son and young HoCo parishioner, Liam Davis-Vojta, sophomore at J.R. Tucker H.S., has joined the school's theater group which is going to the "Fringe Festival" in Edinburgh, Scotland, next August. This is the world's largest art festival with greater than 5,000 shows and more than 2 million tickets sold. Fewer than 30 high school groups are invited to perform there each year so it's a **huge** deal for these kids - and also very costly.



JRT Theatre Journey to the Fringe 2022

Follow our events here:  Weebly  Facebook >

What does your support do? It allows a group of theatre students to perform a student-written and directed piece at the Fringe Festival in Edinburg, Scotland. Their time there will have them immersed in theatre and cultural events as well. Contact Lisa Dyer with any questions at lldyer@henrico.k12.va.us

<https://jrt-scotland-fringe.weeblysite.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/JRT-Scotland-106339008319170>

They are currently holding many fund-raising events to help pay for their travel costs. Liam's HoCo Community can help support him and his fellow students as they endeavor to make this voyage across the Atlantic. Probably the easiest way is to go to their fund-raising web page at <https://jrt-scotland-fringe.weeblysite.com> or if you're on Facebook, www.facebook.com/JRT-Scotland-106339008319170. The cheap, but less easy way, is to download the FlipGive app to your phone and start doing all your online shopping through it by registering this code, 9DPWFV. It works like Amazon Smile and each time you shop, a portion is donated from the company to the group. You also can donate gently-used clothing to the clothing bin in the Tucker HS parking lot; all proceeds benefit the theater group only. Finally (for now at least), there will be a craft and vendor fair just in time for the holidays at Tucker HS on Nov 20, 10:00am - 2:30pm. Get your holiday

shopping in early and support the theater group.

There probably will be other fund-raisers throughout the year including an auction. Community support is vital to their efforts. It is because of generous community partners that these students have had access to so many unique opportunities to perform challenging work and serve as cultural ambassadors on the international stage at the Fringe in Edinburgh, Scotland. Thank you for your help in opening the doors to such exciting experiences for them!

Lastly, if you want to catch them in a live action performance, the production of Annie takes place in the all new Tucker HS Auditorium Dec 9-12, 2021. Liam will be playing the part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Come show him your HoCo love!



You are invited to a book release party

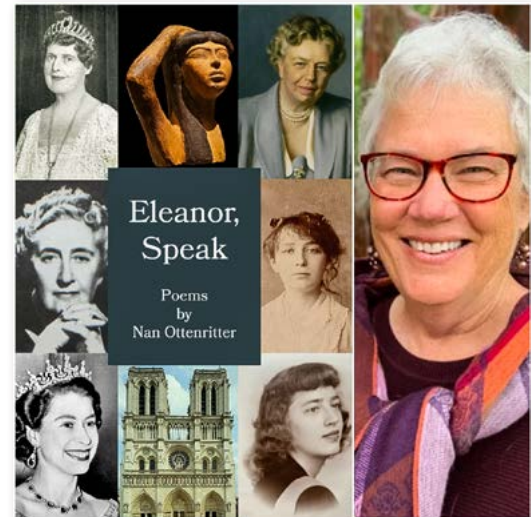
By Nan Ottenritter, author

This summer my first chapbook, "*Eleanor, Speak*," was published. To celebrate, Julie and I are holding a book release party on the back grounds of HoCo on Saturday, November 6, from 3:00 - 5:00 pm. All from our church family are welcomed.

If you would like to attend, please email me at nwottenritter@gmail.com so I can get accurate numbers.

The event will be held outdoors, masking requested. If it rains, the event will be held in the church hall and masking will be required. Thanks for your support!

Eleanor, Speak is now available at www.finishinglinepress.com/product/eleanor-speak-by-nan-ottenritter.





The season of Advent

By Bruce MacAlister, Editor

January 1st is the beginning of the calendar year in most of the western nations. The day after Labor Day in September is the effective start of the year in the United States since vacations end, camps are over, and schools start. For the western Christian churches, Advent is the beginning of the liturgical and church year, anticipating the birth of Jesus at Christmas.



The citizen-sourced font of much wisdom, “Wikipedia” describes it well.

“The name was adopted from Latin *adventus* ‘coming; arrival’, translating Greek *parousia*. In the New Testament, this is the term used for the Second Coming of Christ. Thus, the season of Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the “coming of Christ” from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the eschatological Second Coming.

“Practices associated with Advent include keeping an Advent calendar, lighting an Advent wreath, praying an Advent daily devotional, erecting a Christmas tree or a Chrismon tree, lighting a Christingle, as well as other ways of preparing for Christmas, such as setting up Christmas decorations, a custom that is sometimes done liturgically through a hanging of the greens ceremony. The equivalent of Advent in Eastern Christianity is called the Nativity Fast, but it differs in length and observances, and does not begin the liturgical church year as it does in the West. The Eastern Nativity Fast does not use the equivalent *parousia* in its preparatory services.”

At Holy Comforter a favorite rite of the season is the Advent wreath that hangs threateningly above the heads of the clergy and servers. It is very heavy. Each Sunday an additional candle is lighted and the wreath hoisted above the seats with a winch.



HoCo partnering with St. Stephen's to help Afghan families

By Hilary Smith, Rector

I'm delighted to let you know that the folks organizing Outreach at St. Stephen's are enthusiastic to have our help assisting Afghan families. For October we were invited to bring items to St. Stephen's, 6000 Grove Ave, that were taken to the families. Thanks to all who contributed. As the needs change and the



resettlement continues, St. Stephen's invites us to join in future efforts to help. I'm always so glad when churches in our region can work together. Watch our weekly newsletter, the eMessenger, for updates.

Hoco Birthdays* *For the month of November:

Edna Johnston, 1st; Jay Stearns, 2nd;

Samantha Baggett, 4th; Katherine

Raymond, 4th; John Richardson, 4th;

Bill Smith, 8th;

Robin Kranitzky-Hurdle, 10th;

Mary O'Brien, 11th; George Collier, 22nd;

Judith Harris, 23rd;

Kimberly McCarthy, 26th;

Siyano Prach, 29th



November book club - The Book of Longings

By Stephanie Turner

We will be meeting via Zoom at 7:00 PM on November 16 to discuss Sue Monk Kidd's book, *The Book of Longings*. The link to the meeting is <https://zoom.us/j/99461451877>. This book promises to bring us some lively discussion!

Below is information on the book courtesy of Amazon.com. If you have any questions, please let me know.



“An extraordinary story set in the first century about a woman who finds her voice and her destiny, from the celebrated number one New York Times bestselling author of *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Invention of Wings*.

“In her mesmerizing fourth work of fiction, Sue Monk Kidd takes an audacious approach to history and brings her acclaimed narrative gifts to imagine the story of a young woman named Ana. Raised in a wealthy family with ties to the ruler of Galilee, she is rebellious and ambitious, with a brilliant mind and a daring spirit. She engages in furtive scholarly pursuits and writes narratives about neglected and silenced women. Ana is expected to marry an older widower, a prospect that horrifies her. An encounter with eighteen-year-old Jesus changes everything.

“Their marriage evolves with love and conflict, humor and pathos in Nazareth, where Ana makes a home with Jesus, his brothers, and their mother, Mary. Ana's pent-up longings intensify amid the turbulent resistance to Rome's occupation of Israel, partially led by her brother, Judas. She is sustained by her fearless aunt Yaltha, who harbors

a compelling secret. When Ana commits a brazen act that puts her in peril, she flees to Alexandria, where startling revelations and greater dangers unfold, and she finds refuge in unexpected surroundings. Ana determines her fate during a stunning convergence of events considered among the most impactful in human history.

“Grounded in meticulous research and written with a reverential approach to Jesus's [sic] life that focuses on his humanity, *The Book of Longings* is an inspiring, unforgettable account of one woman's bold struggle to realize the passion and potential inside her, while living in a time, place and culture devised to silence her. It is a triumph of



storytelling both timely and timeless, from a masterful writer at the height of her powers.”



Men At The Movies: Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction Yet Again

By Steve Van Voorhees

The November 9th Men at the Movies featured film is *The Cup*. The phrase, “The Cup,” means just one thing to most humans living on planet Earth - the world championship in football (soccer to us). This movie story is set in the summer of 1998, when France hosted the first 32-team

tournament. The final match had the perennial champions Brazil versus the host nation's team.

So, what's the connection between this event and a Buddhist monastery in India inhabited by refugee Tibetan teens who were smuggled out of China by their parents to continue and preserve Tibetan Buddhist culture? Well, they are boys, they read soccer magazines, sneak over to an Indian bar to watch early Cup matches, and they play soccer with a Coca-Cola can. What do they want? They want the Abbot to OK them watching the final match in **The Monastery!!** First barrier: there are no television sets there (and very few in the entire region); this has never been done in this quiet world of Buddhism; and this will cost money they don't have for both a satellite dish and a TV receiver. Second, bigger barrier: the Abbot must disregard everything about the purpose of the monastery to OK this radical, secular idea of the monk trainees, and he has to contemplate what this means to the future of the monastery and his monks.



Here's the dilemma summed up in a conversation between the Abbot and his aide, the disciplinarian of the monks, Geko:

Abbot asks what the World Cup is.

Geko: "It's two civilized nations fighting over a ball."

Abbot: "I presume you are joking."

Geko: "No sir."

Abbot: "So there is violence?"

Geko: "Sometimes."

Abbot: "Is there sex?"

Geko: "No."

Abbot: "And how do you know so much about this World Cup?"

You can see there are several dramas going on in one movie - *the Cup* final game itself; an intergenerational struggle between the Elders' cultural and belief structures (that are being

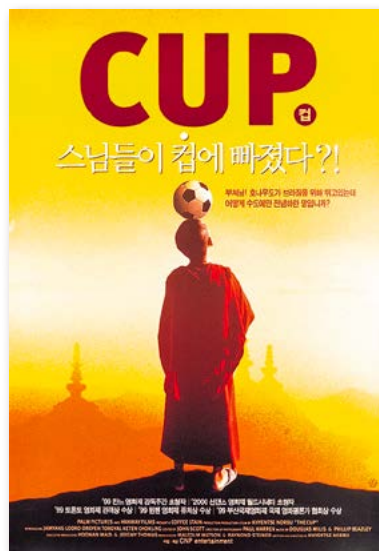
decimated by China's government in Tibet) and the youth drawn to pop culture; and the uphill battle to locate a TV set to rent and move it to the monastery, if the Abbot permits. Overall, it is an age-old tug of the heart over wisdom embodied in the Abbot and the Elders and the youthful enthusiasm of the trainee monks for all of life, not just its sublime beauties and revelations.

This particular film story is not just based on a true story - it is a true story, written and directed by a lama, a teacher, and a film professional who has the only movie made in a Buddhist monastery with real monks playing their parts.

Moreover, Khyentse Norbu is considered a reincarnation of a 19th century saint, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo. Norbu, the Buddhist Lama, says, "Film has a potential of showing us who we are too."

This 93-minute film is in Hindi and Tibetan with English subtitles. It received a 7/10 from IMDb, an 86% audience rating from Rotten Tomatoes, and 3 stars from the late great Roger Ebert.

So join me and fellow pilgrims on a visit to a faraway place, a holy place where our brothers work out their destinies. We will gather in the Parlor (masked and distanced) on Tuesday, November 9th, at 6:00 p.m.





Introducing the Rev Heather Baggett

By the Rev Heather Baggett, Priest in Residence

When people find out that I was not raised Episcopalian, I am often asked how I became Episcopalian. I thought I would share that story with you, as a way of introduction. When I began seminary, I was, as I liked to say, “denominationally challenged.” I went to seminary with a call to become a healthcare chaplain but my home church for the previous four years had been the protestant student worship group at Georgetown University. In my youth, I decided that I needed to research and select a denomination with which I agreed with everything they believed. Since I was choosing as an adult and was going to be a minister, I might have to defend my choice.

I soon realized the folly of that approach. At that point, 22-year-old Heather decided to start visiting churches. My first selection was Trinity Episcopal Church because their service didn't start until 11:30 AM and I would get to sleep in. I enjoyed the Sunday morning service well enough. But what stuck with me was that there was going to be a service for All Saints Day later that week. Father Fred, Trinity's rector at that time, announced that anyone who had loved ones who had died in the last year could place their name on a list to be prayed for. I immediately knew I had to be at that service. My best friend Fatema and her father Naushad had been killed only a few months before.

I showed up at Trinity later that week and sat at the back. In that moment, I was overwhelmed. I was 2,000 miles away from my family, my Dad was battling cancer, my best friend was dead, and I had just started a rigorous academic program. Tears began to stream down my face, without

my permission or control. In that moment, I felt utterly alone and lost.

And then I felt a hand on my shoulder. I looked up into the face of a woman I would later find out was named Terry. Without asking me any questions or even knowing my name, she told me that I wasn't allowed to be alone right now. And then she sat with me and fed me tissues throughout the service. And I realized I was not alone. In that moment, I found my home. I later fell in love with the liturgy and theology of the Episcopal Church but it was there, with tears on my face and Terry's arm around my shoulder that I became Episcopalian in my heart.

The next week, I walked into Father Fred's office and stated, “I want to become Episcopalian, join Trinity, and become a Priest. What do I need to do?” To his everlasting credit, he simply said, “We'll start by meeting once a month for the next year” rather than laughing me out of his office. I am both proud and humbled by the journey that began those many years ago in Fort Worth, Texas. I am blessed to be able to celebrate the 9th anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood on October 27, 2021.



Over the course of my ministry I have been blessed by my many teachers and mentors,

coworkers and partners in ministry. I have learned and grown and found what lights me up inside. I love art and creativity. I feel closest with myself and God when I am creating - whether painting or baking or making jewelry. It is this love of creativity and imagination that has informed much of my ministry.

I find great connection in the questions that are often asked with Godly Play, and more importantly with the simple premise of wondering about the sacred stories. One of the most powerful questions, I can explore with patients and family members in Hospice is “I wonder what the worst

thing that could happen for you is?” and then “If that happens, I wonder what you will do?” Our imagination is not just for fun stories or artwork. Imagination is a core spiritual strength that helps us find hope and see a path forward.

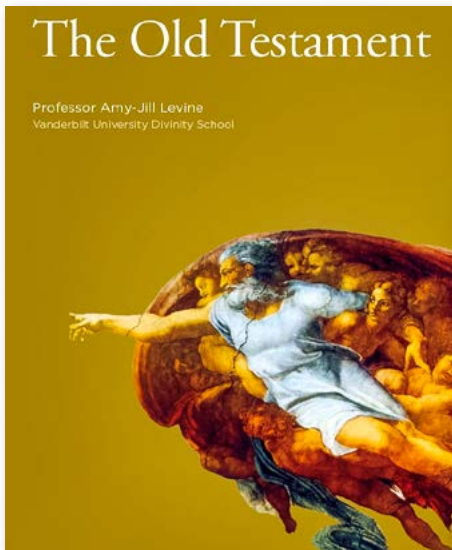
It is my hope that I, my spouse David, and my child, Sam, find a home with you here at Holy Comforter. I look forward to learning and growing beside you. Thank you for the welcome and kindness you have already shown us.



New Curriculum But an Old Topic for Sunday Morning Class

By Peggy L. Hombs

Beginning Sunday, October 31st, the Sunday morning adult formation class will engage a new



24-lecture curriculum entitled quite simply “The Old Testament” presented by an old favorite, professor Amy-Jill Levine of Vanderbilt University Divinity School.



This course will “offer an introduction to the history, literature, and religion of ancient Israel and early Judaism.” The presentations will cover the content of the biblical books, as well as debates over their meaning, the

critical methods through which they have been interpreted, historical context, literary import, and issues of religious concern.

Each week read-ahead material (including supporting Biblical text suggestions) is sent via email to participants; on Sundays a 30-minute DVD segment is viewed, followed by a wide-ranging and invigorating discussion.

The class meets from 8:45-9:45 a.m. in the Parlor - masked and distanced. All are welcome to join the group.



Holiday Grief Workshop

By Julie Edwards

Holidays can be emotionally rough on people who have suffered loss of a loved one. This workshop from 10am to noon on December 11th will provide a safe space for gaining tools and resources, for expression as you’re comfortable, and for addressing your own grief during this holiday season. I will be joined by the Rev Heather Baggett, priest in residence and hospice chaplain. Contact me at rajthegrey@gmail.com with any questions.





Stewardship Update

By Lisa Lettau, Senior Warden

Hopefully everyone has received the October Stewardship materials from the Vestry. If you did not get one in the mail and would like a copy, please let the office know. There will also be extra pledge cards available in the Narthex. While Stewardship is giving of our time, talent, and treasure, we must focus on the treasure portion in order to properly plan for 2022.

As you discern what you are able to do to further the ministries at Holy Comforter, it's helpful to look at actual figures. Below is a recap of our actual income and expenses from January 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021, along with the 2021 Budget that was approved by the Vestry in December 2020.

As you can see, expenses exceeded revenue

	Jan-Sept	21 Budget
Pledge Income	191,112.98	236,500.00
Beck Fund Income	23,775.00	30,000.00
Outreach Income	12,000.00	12,000.00
Other Income	6,999.55	20,246.00
Total Income	233,887.53	298,746.00
Administration	45,863.41	59,059.00
Christian Formation	350.00	2,350.00
Evangelism	230.40	600.00
Music	1,686.27	3,000.00
Outreach	2,268.79	12,000.00
Diocesan Pledge	17,250.00	23,000.00
Parish Life	0.00	1,300.00
Pastoral Care	165.00	500.00
Personnel	137,187.23	185,720.00
Property/Maintenance	38,109.04	51,200.00
Stewardship	207.00	200.00
Worship	-1,453.75	1,500.00
Total Expenses	241,863.39	340,429.00
Net Ordinary Income	-7,975.86	-41,683.00

on the 2021 budget, but the forgiveness of our Payroll Protection Plan loan (\$22,800) is not included in the above figures. This means we have a good chance of not ending 2021 with a deficit, which is quite an accomplishment given the last 18 months. Many thanks to everyone who

has faithfully continued to pay their pledges, as pledges make up the bulk of our income.

There are expense areas where we are well under budget this year such as Parish Life and Christian Formation that are helping this year's bottom line. It's important to point out only 3% of our annual budget funds Christian Formation, Evangelism, Parish Life, Pastoral Care, Stewardship, and Worship. .



Personnel expenses are 62% of our 2021 income. There were no increases given in 2021 even though the Diocesan suggested increase was 0.92%,

and it is likely the Diocese will suggest an increase of up to 2% for the coming year.

Utilities alone eat up 12% of our income, before a single repair or service call is done on our property. For 2021, Property and Maintenance expenses are just over 17% of our budget. We have an aging physical plant, and we've had to use a good portion of our maintenance reserves this year with roof and gutter repairs, needed electrical work, and updating the meeting room and food pantry.

As we look forward to 2022, we know circumstances change, and no two situations are alike. We do ask that you prayerfully consider how you can help us meet the needs of the community through HoCo through your financial pledge.



Shrine Mont 2021

By Lisa Lettau

A glorious weekend in Orkney Springs was had by a small number of parishioners the weekend of October 22nd through 24th. We took advantage of our time in this place apart to simply enjoy being together. Shrine Mont has adapted in the Covid environment in ways that made us feel safe without losing the magic that is part of being on the mountain. While masks were required in public spaces and food was served cafeteria style, just being there more than made up for those minor inconveniences.



We celebrated a birthday, ate, told stories, ate, walked the labyrinth, ate, played games – there was definitely a pattern. With no set program or agenda, we had plenty of time for personal and group

reflection and to simply be. Rest and relaxation abounded while friendships were both made and deepened, brought together by the extraordinary community that is HoCo. We talked about our past, our present, and our hopes for the future. We had worship in the evenings and in the mornings, and left refreshed.



Pictures of the Blessing of the Animals, 2021.



Church of the Holy Comforter, Richmond

a parish in the Diocese of Virginia under the Episcopal Church in the USA
which is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion
Monument Avenue at Staples Mill Road
web - www.hoco.org; e-mail - office@hoco.org;
phone 804-355-3251; fax 804-355-0049

Coming Events at the Church of the Holy Comforter
See the [Hoco web site calendar page](#) for detailed calendar and rota

Schedule of church events following the Covid-19 period (still evolving)

- **Sundays**, 10:00am Holy Eucharist Rite II, in person with nursery available; the sermon can be found on Facebook and YouTube
- **Sundays**, 4:30pm Story Time, a service for children, their families, and friends of all ages, on Facebook
- **Monday**, 8:00pm Compline for the BCP or the New Zealand BCP or from the Northumbria Community, Facebook
- **Tuesday**, 7:30am Morning Prayer, Facebook
- **Wednesday**, 11:30am Centering Prayer, in person in the Parlor and via Zoom
- **Wednesday**, Noon Holy Communion, in person in the Parlor and via Zoom, so that you can join in the prayers
- **Thursday**, 7:30am Morning Prayer, Facebook
- **Friday**, 8:00pm Compline for the BCP or the New Zealand BCP or from the Northumbria Community, Facebook
- **Saturday**, 7:00am Morning Prayer, Facebook
- **Saturday**, 8:00pm Prayers and a Reflection that preview readings and themes for Sunday, Facebook

Food Pantry Hours:

- First and third Saturdays, 11:00am to noon
- First and third Tuesdays, 5:30 to 6:30pm

Veterans' Shelter Dinner

- Prep between 5 and 6pm - 4th Thursdays
- Drop off at shelter between 6 and 7pm

Editing of the Messenger is done by Bruce MacAlister, the layout by George Collier.
The December Messenger will be available Sunday, December 5th, 2021. The deadline for that edition is the day after Thanksgiving, Friday, November 26th, (but earlier submission is encouraged).
If you feel that you have something you'd like to contribute, please contact Bruce MacAlister at editor@hoco.org

